

# MIHALY ASSOCIATES

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*Dear Howard,*

Time for reflection, granted by various airlines in the past two weeks, has produced these thoughts.

Your conviction that economic and political planning is essential, and urgent now, is right on. I shall give whatever support I can through my informal contacts with Williams.

The product can easily be dreadful; and expensive. Clearly, there is no sure way to success. Economic planning, heavens knows, is an uncertain art. Political planning is at least as uncertain and just as much an art.

The following thoughts run the risk of being self-serving. Despite a schedule that may preclude participation, and a sense that a rational man should involve himself with Micronesia once and no more, I do have an itch to have a hand in. That disclaimer having been made, I would recommend that you and your clients take two cuts at the problem.

The first concerns the intellectual approach. I suggest you break the subject into macro and micro issues. The former include type of legislature, linkage between legislative and executive, degree and type of decentralization (counties? municipalities? etc). The latter include size and selection of civil service, procedures of the various levels and organs of government, and so on. Success depends on good work on both sets of issues. The macro, however, must be done first, and requires skills and knowledge that the micro does not demand.

The second perspective concerns the question of who does the planning. I would argue that the persons who take on the macro questions must know the Marianas well. The

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form of government must reflect historical practice, the nature of local politics and social interaction, and the constraints of the human and physical environment. This is an obvious point. The micro issues can be handled by bright young public administration specialists, working under the supervision of senior men who do know the scene.

The moral of the above, in my view, is: beware of bearers of canned solutions.

Let me know how this goes. And be well.

*but*

*ben*

Eugene B. Mihaly

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